

# NGIS Okinawa earns five-star accreditation

Story by Mass Communication Specialist 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Steve White

Navy Gateway  
Inns and Suites (NGIS)  
Okinawa reached a major  
milestone earning the  
coveted Admiral Elmo R.  
Zumwalt five-star  
accreditation award for  
customer service and  
operations, July 20.



The award proclaims NGIS has captured the concept of stellar service in five major areas including customer service, front desk operations, housekeeping, building maintenance and warehouse and facility conditions.

NGIS Director, retired Master Chief Terry Woodcock, said during the 2010 accreditation review numerous deficiencies were noted across every area of the operations. “It was sobering to look at how the operations had deteriorated over the years,” he said.

NGIS Okinawa has never received any type of accreditation. With a new goal in mind, Woodcock joined the team and put new focus on personal accountability and daily business practices.

“We hired [retired Senior Chief] Mike Conroy, whose laser-focused leadership and foresight helped us to tackle previously insurmountable problems,” recalled Woodcock. “We also hired Stacey Francois who revamped the entire Housekeeping Department from the ground up.”

Conroy said he joined the NGIS Okinawa team with the goal of achieving a five-star accreditation, which at first seemed impossible. Through a well-defined vision, hard work and dedication, the changes began to reap benefits. “The payoff of having better facilities was quickly praised by our guests and was ultimately noticed by the CNIC [Commander, Navy Installations Command] accreditation team,” he said.

To raise the standards, Woodcock put a few changes into place. New operating procedures were created and enforced and more than \$9 million was spent on renovations and furniture upgrades. “Our goal was to improve the level of customer service provided to our guests by improving the quality of our facilities,” he said.

Even though they experienced major setbacks with electrical diagrams not matching, drainage systems flooding rooms, mold and fallen ceilings, the team stayed persistent on improving their standards.

“Team NGIS Okinawa has really turned the corner and embraced the concept of ‘YES’ [You’re Empowered to Succeed],” said Woodcock. He noted that the housekeepers are interacting with the guests, the maintenance team is acting proactively addressing potential problems and the warehouse staff implemented an accurate inventory tracking program.

A good working relationship between the leadership and support from the Fleet Activities Okinawa chain of command helped NGIS achieve this accreditation.

“The level of commitment and tenacity by the staff cannot be overstated,” said Woodcock. “We are all justifiably proud of this accomplishment.”